

Spring 2003



King County

Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and
Dependency Services Division

The Good Newsletter

Issue 3

From the editor:

This newsletter is an effort by the King County Regional Support Network (KCRSN) and the Quality Review Team to document the thoughts of consumers, youth and supporting staff.

The King County Regional Support Network (KCRSN) which funds mental health is responsible for publicly funded mental health services in King County.



WANTED:

Articles, poetry, stories from readers of the newsletter.

If you have a personal story to tell, helpful information you would like to share or creative expression such as poetry, pictures or art, please mail them to:

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Letters, articles & information submitted may be edited for clarity and content.

Remember this is the good newsletter.

In Our Own Voices - Living with Mental Illness

By Steven C. Collins

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) of Greater Seattle is the sponsor of a new project called "In Our Own Voices – Living with Mental Illness." Consumers share their experiences with mental illness. They speak to any one who wants to listen including high schools, middle schools, rotary clubs, and college students. The stories are different, unique, and share the understanding of the road to a better life. I interviewed two of the speakers.

The first story is from a client named

Lana Scott. Here is her story:

"At this point in my life I am stable. My mental health is good. I have a family that supports me. My family is not biological relatives, but very good friends who love and support me. I am dealing with Schizoaffective disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

In my darkest days I spent a lot of time living on the streets and in and

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Mission Statement:

The knowledge and wisdom that comes from personal experience as a consumer of the mental health system should be shared with all who have an eye and an ear to absorb what is written.

The pen is the excellent communicator. Our commitment is to make the consumer voice heard and acknowledged in King County.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

By: Steven C. Collins

While reading a textbook (M. Woodside & T. McClam, p.18) An Introduction to Human Services, "I came across a very informative section about "meeting human needs". This section spoke about a need hierarchy developed by Abraham Maslow. A basic principle of the needs hierarchy is that "Individuals cannot address higher order needs until their most basic needs have been met" (Woodside & McClam, 2002, p. 183).

The authors go on to say that if an individual is hungry, cold, scared, or in a life threatening situation, this person will have difficulty concentrating on love and belonging needs. Likewise, people who get little acceptance or respect from others will have difficulty involving themselves in activities that will lead to self-actualization.

Brammer (1999) suggested that the needs can be divided into two categories: "D" needs (deficiency needs) and "B" needs (being needs).

"D" needs comprise the first four levels of the Hierarchy, wherein an individual seeks to achieve calm and satisfaction. After these "D" needs are met, the individual seeks to achieve the "B" needs and concentrates on developing the self.

Maslow's hierarchy begins at the base of a triangle with the "D" needs, or calm and satisfaction concerns, and graduates up the triangle to the "B" needs towards developing the self.

On the right side of this page is a description of Maslow's hierarchy. Remember that the hierarchy starts with physiological needs at the bottom and graduates up to the top of the column.

I believe this hierarchy of needs information is important for people to have. I have found through personal experience that having shelter, food, and financial stability in the Physiological and Safety base of the Pyramid structure, helped me stabilize, and then accomplish the goals related to social, self-esteem, and self-actualization aspects of the pyramid.



Pilot Projects

By: Steven C. Collins

The Consumer Pilot Program is sponsored by the King County RSN, which makes funding available for projects developed by consumers who want to become financially independent or who are in need of funding for projects that promote optimum mental and physical health.

Rebecca Bennett and Steven Collins of the Client Services Team visited five projects that have received funds. The purpose was to observe and listen to the project descriptions.

The first was Transitional Resource (TR), which received funds to start a business selling flowers. It looks like about half an acre of brush and bushes has been cleared in a space behind TR for the purpose of growing a variety of flowers. They have

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MASLOW'S HIERARCHY

Self-actualization

- Realizing one's own potential
- Self-development activities
- Behaving creatively
- Problem-centered orientation to life
- Identifying with the problems of humanity.
- Acceptance of self and others.

Self-esteem

- Self-confidence
- Independence
- Achievement
- Competence
- Knowledge
- Status
- Personal recognition
- Respect

Social

- Love and affection
- Friendships
- Association with others
- Affiliation

Safety

- Shelter
- Protection from immediate or future danger to physical well-being
- Protection from immediate or future threat to psychological or economic well-being

Physiological

- Hunger
- Thirst
- Sex
- Sleep
- Rest
- Exercise
- Elimination
- Pain avoidance
- Oxygen consumption



Taking Charge of Your Life

By: Lenore Meyer

If you feel you have control over your own life, you have gotten over the first hurdle to creating change in your circumstances. If you don't feel you have control over your life, it is very important to take back control. It is very difficult to feel well when you are not in charge of your own life.

Here are some steps you might take to feel you have more control.

1. Ask yourself what controls your life? List things such as your family, a disability, lack of money etc.
2. List things you could do to take back control over your life. For instance, you could – talk with your family about issues related to control. Perhaps have family counseling sessions. Ask others for what you need and want. Get a part-time job doing something you enjoy (or volunteer). Attend a class on something you've always wanted to learn.
3. List what you think is keeping you from doing the things you need to do to take back control over your life. For instance, do you lack motivation, have low self-esteem, feel like it's too much trouble, feel scared, do not want to upset others, want to avoid the anger of family members.
4. List the benefits of taking back control over your life. For instance, you would feel better physically and emotionally, have less stress, have more time to do things you enjoy, have time to take good care of your-

self, feel more fulfilled, improve the quality of your life. Taking charge of your life usually happens gradually. You may choose to take some small steps like asking a friend to take a walk, eating less fast food. List the steps you plan to take to get back control over your life and when you plan to take them. Writing them down helps to ensure that you will actually do the things you want to do.

*Some of this information was from an U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Handbook called "Developing a Recovery and Wellness Lifestyle".



Smoking and How I Quit!

By: Steven C. Collins

Twenty years ago a friend approached me and told me a story about a martial arts instructor who helped a man overcome his addiction to heroin. This addicted person became very skilled in the fighting techniques of Kung Fu. He also became very healthy because he had to eat nutritious and balanced meals to keep up with the strenuous workouts. This martial arts student developed respect for his newfound skill level and improved physical health. He felt better than ever. The student no longer needed the high from heroin or the destructive addiction of heroin.

I went to this martial arts instructor and told him I wanted to quit smoking. Sure enough, in about a year, I picked up twenty pounds of muscle and much respect for my new martial arts skill level. I developed a

thought one evening that told me that it would be wrong and disrespectful to my instructor and myself to put the poison of nicotine in my body any longer. From that moment I no longer had the urge to smoke. The addiction was gone.

There are programs that attempt to help people quit smoking. This one worked for me. I wanted to share my experience with our readers.



Leadership Academy

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conditions or to make decisions that move things forward under our own initiative. Sometimes we do not know how to take control. Planning, organizing, making decisions, and taking action on situations affecting our lives is what is called EMPOWERMENT. Empowerment skills are what the training focused on.

This is what advocacy really is taking the initiative, developing projects, getting those projects on their way, collaborating with others, participating in policy decisions, influencing the budgets at the state and local levels, improving services, creating new services and educating the community.

As graduates of the Leadership Academy, Steve and Lenore hope to become more effective QRT members and be a stronger consumer advocate for King County.



Pilot Project*(Continued from page 2)*

already started a successful business selling organic herbs and vegetables to restaurants. We got to taste the veggies, and we were very impressed.

Community Psychiatric Clinic (CPC), Wallingford House Clubhouse, showed us their bead and necklace project. The beautiful colors and creative designs of the beadwork impressed us. They plan to sell their beadwork at a local small business.

CPC also has a consumer operated vending machine business that is a lucrative and organized business.

At the Belltown/Clean Start program, which is affiliated with CPC, we sat in on a very informative and energetic meeting about the health and recovery group in place at the Clean Start Club House. The consumer run group is working on improving social skills such as relationships and bringing about optimal health.

Rebecca Bennett and Lenore Meyer observed another excellent health and recovery program at Therapeutic Health Services (THS). Diet and exercise are the main focus of this program. There were two clients who lost close to 100 pounds each. Yes, this is a serious focus on health. The health class has a series of exercise tapes played on a television in a class environment, where the clients follow the lead of an exercise guru. Congratulations to this successful program.

This year there were 7 pilot project recipients that received financial awards. They are:

- **Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS):** Computer lab/computer loan program to teach skills and offer translation, word processing, and production of Chinese and other Asian language materials.
- **Community Psychiatric Clinic (CPC):** 1) a library at the Sunrise Center site; 2) cooking/nutrition class at Clean Start; and 3) a beading/jewelry class, with the intention of sales opportunities, at Wallingford House.
- **Harborview Mental Health Center Consumer Council:** YMCA "flexible" fitness club memberships, for consumers to be able to use interchangeably.
- **NAMI-Greater Seattle:** a tool shed to be designed and built by Hofmann House members, on the premises of Hofmann House. Hofmann House was a home in Seattle renovated as a work training project by persons with severe mental illness who learned construction skills.
- **NAMI-Eastside:** Small business project, making and selling promotional buttons to advertise NAMI.
- **Seattle Children's Home:** Completion of espresso cart and continuing development of culinary Arts Café for kids at SCH.
- **Seattle Mental Health:** Music therapy class to build and play musical instruments.

The Good Newsletter will keep our readers updated on the progress of the pilot projects.



Healing and Life Changes

By: Susan Richert

I was diagnosed with a mental illness in 1979. I was in and out of psychiatric hospitals for about 12 years. I was given many diagnosis including BI-polar, Paranoid schizophrenia, and Schizoaffective disorder. You would think the psychiatrist could make up their minds.

In 1991 Tegretol was added to my "cocktail" of medications. The psychiatrist said I was having brain seizures. This seemed to do the trick and I haven't been hospitalized since then. I went to work as a mental health advocate and started my rehabilitation program from spending time in the mental health clinic to part-time work.

Having a Biology degree I became very interested in the Mind-Body connection. Over the past 24 years I have consulted many holistic practitioners involved in healing people to reduce or eliminate medication, always under the full supervision of their psychiatrist.

The most important lifestyle change I made was changing my eating habits, along with exercising and meaningful spiritual practices. I have found that the Well Mind Association at 206-547-6167 and The Depression Wellness Network at 206-528-9975 are great organization to provide information and peer support to keep our mind and body in optimum health.

In Our Own Voices - Living with Mental Illness

(Continued from page 1)

out of hospitals. I remember when a psychiatrist said to me, "you are chronically mentally ill and you will never be able to work."

I did manage to go to work for a while a couple of years ago. I worked in a nursing home and was employee of the month. I talked to patients and cheered them up. I became a familiar happy face. It was a matter of sometimes just saying hello to a patient who was alone that cheered them up."

Lana's first speaking engagement was at a high school. Lana was impressed with the reception she received from the high school students. Lana has a saying she likes to share. She says, "If you have a goal, keep the faith. You can do it!"

The second story is from Mathew King. Mathew King in his darkest days was in and out of jails, prisons and mental hospitals. He was a heavy user of drugs and alcohol to self medicate his pain, (undiagnosed manic depression). Matthew had also organic brain damage. He lived on the streets at one time and at another part of his life was a successful businessman. He can talk about and compare the two different life styles.

Matthew believes that a person who has lived the lifestyle of a drug and alcohol abuser can relate better to others who use, because he's been there. "I can talk about the black-outs and near suicides, the withdrawals from heroin addiction when

you're locked up". Matthew was diagnosed in 1991 or 1992 but did not commit to stop using until 1996.

Matthew is clubhouse president at Therapeutic Health Services, where he organizes daily activities, shops for groceries, and organizes field trips.

"Coping skills while you're still diagnosed with a mental illness are spiritual for me. Daily meditations and prayers and reading the Bible have helped me. I attend Mentally Ill Chemical Abusers (MICA) groups. I attend Recovery Plus which has a drug and alcohol counselor only. We talk about where to do shopping to not be around drugs and alcohol. Also we practice stress management through meditation and prayer". Matthew stated that he believes that you have to have medication and counseling for solid recovery.

If you would like more information about the "In Our Own Voices Program", contact Anissa Rauls at NAMI Greater Seattle. The phone number is (206) 783-9264.

"If you have a goal, keep the faith. You can do it!"



Leadership Academy

By: Lenore Meyer

On April 9 through 11, 2003, Steven Collins and Lenore Meyer, King County QRT members attended a training in Federal Way, Washington. The title for the training was LEADERSHIP ACADEMY. It was about consumer involvement in Collective Advocacy and Organizational Skills. This is a self-help program successfully

adapted and implemented by the West Virginia Mental Health Consumers Association.

Some of us learned early on to complain about situations, but very often we do not know how to organize with others facing similar issues. We may be unsure how to plan and take action to change con-

(Continued on page 3)



NAMI Eastside Presents

Peer-to-Peer Classes

Date:

**MONDAY Evening
April 14th to June 17th**

Time:

**7:00 to 9:00 PM
Garibaldi Room**

**NAMI Eastside
Family Resource Center
16315 NE 87th Street Suite
B-1
Redmond, WA 98052-3537**

**Contact NAMI Eastside
425-885.NAMI (6264) or
consumers@nami-
eastside.org**

**Bus stops near the office
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264, 266, 291, 922 and
929**

**Sound Transit
ST 540 AND 545**



The following two poems were contributed by Erin Kate Foley. I know you will enjoy them.

4 A.M. SLANT

Just me and the white noise
 Broken up by the radio
 Playing the blues
 Sometimes I switch it off
 'cause the white noise sounds better
 I set the rocker pacing
 And wait for the dawn
 Remembering the warmth
 Of the cat on my lap
 Yes – she's gone too
 Though it wouldn't
 Right the wrongs
 I wish I could write songs
 Instead I contemplate
 World hunger and the human need for touch
 Attempting to forget my own, while
 Counting coffee rings on the table.

FOCUS

God,
 Your colors are too bright
 I need to stop and adjust the set
 Can you arrange for me to have a black and white?
 I don't want to dream in color anymore
 This kid didn't learn from the hot stove
 I keep burning my hands
 Time for a new video
 This one's played out
 Run so many times it's frayed
 Why God,
 Do I shrink from the touch that lacks malice
 And run toward reaching arms of those who search
 out new addictions
 New ways to hurt me, you, them, us
 Or something for revenge
 Against the hurt they live, embrace,
 And hide inside.

The Lake

By: MAE

The lake is beautiful
 In the day light
 When the sun is shining bright
 I can see lake fairies in flight.
 They shine, flicker and glow
 Here and there.
 Sometimes it seems that they
 Swim and flicker
 Again in a different place.
 The lake is blessed with fairies
 I say.
 In the day light
 When the sun is shining bright.
 It is beautiful, the lake.

The following poem is from Sherry Storms. She is contributing her poem for our reader's enjoyment.

EDGES

I walk on edges constantly, the edge
 of rage most common now.
 Sorrow, sadness, even fear turn to anger anyhow.
 If a glimpse of joy I chance to see,
 Frustration evolves because you see
 It's never really meant to be.
 No contentment, only bitterness for me.
 With every word I clam my voice.
 Four square breaths with every thought.
 The twenty-third psalm, the Lord's Prayer,
 And thousands of aves whispered there
 Some time buys that I might prepare,
 So my words don't reveal the tension there
 Within my mind, and heart, and soul,
 A struggle endless for self-control.
 For the most part, it works out well.
 It drives my work, life brushing hell
 And the redeeming feature of my staying here?
 Perhaps, at my eulogy someone will share
 That my life was of worth, but I won't hear.

The author of this page of poetry is MAE. Please enjoy her writing.

MY BED

*My bed reminds me of the womb,
Soft and warm, safe and quite,
Dark like a cave.*

*All tucked inside the womb of
My bed, where I love to
Rest my weary head.*

*That is where I love to be,
My teddy bears, kitty kats, and me.*

CATS

*Cats are awesome and cool, sneaky and
Creepy, sleek and smooth,
Soft and furry
I love to pet them, don't you?*

*I think they are mystical and mysteri-
ous.*

*Sometimes I think they are magical,
hilarious, entertaining, amusing, lov-
able and cudable. I don't believe
they're ever terrible. That's Cats.*

THE DANCE OF TREES

*The dance of the trees are
Beautiful in the breeze
The breeze and the trees
Become one.*

*They flow together in harmony.
Through the winds of change.
Up, down and all around,
The wind blows the limbs and leaves
Of the trees.*

*Then there is a sudden stillness,
Until the wind comes again
And joins the trees.*

*They become one and create the dance
of the trees Eternally.*

POEMS

*Here I sit in my rocking chair,
All comfortable and warm, in my robe,
With my feet up on a stool,
Writing in a book,
Poems for you.*

*The words come and go, all
Kinds of things going on in my head.
I want to cuddle up in my be,
And dream an awesome dream.
A dream about fairies of all colors
Dancing on the lake as if it were glass.
Miniature giraffes, tigers that guard
you,
Turtles of all kinds, pink roses with
Pearls and lace, teddy bears and baby
dolls, sneaky little monkeys, dragon
Flys and frogs, seashells and candles that
Smell good. These are just a few of my
favorite
Things I like to share with you.
So here I am, writing in a book of poems
for you.*

THE WHOLE

*If you could begin to
Think about the mystery of
Your life and all the things
Which connect you with the
Life that fills the world and
The whole planet, you might
Realize that we are all one.
A part of the whole, the whole
A part of us. How great thou art
Oh Lord, we cannot comprehend
It all.*

*How wonderful, how awesome and
Great it is to know just this.*

I made these cat sculptures to help me grieve losing my cat, Bozzie. He had been my friend and comfort for years and that is why I make my cats with a heart on them. The orange cat is from a picture and he has 7 toes, or "thumbs, just like the original. The cats are sewed by hand and then painted. Making them comforted me and they are very comforting to hold as well. Doing little projects helps keep my mind off my anxiety and feeling depressed.



MAE



When I sewed the pink doll, I searched to find a way to give her the big, brown eyes. I did the hair and dressed her, again sewing entirely by hand. This was good therapy for me and I'd like other people to be inspired by what they can also do just with things they have on hand.

MAE





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We're on the web!

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